



Is it Time for Christians to Recognize Easter's Pagan Roots?

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Easter, a time of merriment and joy, is celebrated by millions across the globe. For Christians, Easter carries profound religious significance as the commemoration of Jesus Christ's resurrection. However, beneath the surface of these familiar customs and religious observances, lies a complex history intertwined with ancient pagan rituals and celestial forces. Have you ever stopped to question the roots of this festivity? In this short article, we delve into the history of Easter and we uncover links to ancient pagan practices, celestial forces, and mystical rites.

The Pagan Origins of Easter

Easter, as it's known today, is a blend of Christian and pagan practices. The festival falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox, a time of year that was of significant importance to ancient civilizations. The equinox marked a time of balance, with daylight and darkness in equal measure, symbolizing the end of winter and the arrival of spring. This period was synonymous with rebirth and renewal, themes that are still associated with Easter today. Such celestial events held mystical significance for ancient cultures and were often associated with myriad deities and rituals.

Easter's Name: The Goddess Eostre

The very name 'Easter' is believed to have originated from the Saxon word 'Eostre', the name of a goddess of spring and fertility. Eostre was honored with sacrifices around the Passover time each year, a festival that also aligns with the spring equinox. The association of Easter with a goddess further strengthens the argument for its pagan roots.

The Goddess Ishtar: Another Link to Paganism

The connections between Easter and paganism extend beyond Eostre. Ishtar often known as Ashtoreth - see [1 Kings 11:5](#)), a goddess from ancient Mesopotamian religion, also has ties to Easter. The Sumerian legend of Damuzi (Tammuz) and his wife Inanna (Ishtar) parallels the Easter story of resurrection. According to this legend, after Tammuz dies, Ishtar follows him to the underworld. After being judged and killed, Ishtar is resurrected and returns to earth, a story remarkably similar to the resurrection of Jesus.

The Christian Adoption of Easter

Easter, as we know it today, came into being around the mid-second century AD. In 325 AD, the Council of Nicaea, convened by Emperor Constantine, decided that Easter should fall on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox. This decision connected Easter to the lunar calendar, further highlighting the festival's ties to celestial observations.

The Solar Cycle and Occultism: Deciding the Date of Easter

The date of Easter, determined by the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, is set to be the first Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox. This calculation aligns Easter with celestial forces and the solar cycle, elements that were central to pagan belief systems. This alignment of a Christian celebration with the solar cycle is often viewed as a form of occultism, further evidencing the pagan influence on Easter.

The Easter Bunny and Eggs: Symbols of Fertility

The symbols associated with Easter, such as the Easter bunny and eggs, also have pagan origins. The hare was a symbol of Eostre and represented fertility and the arrival of spring. Similarly, eggs, as a symbol of new life and rebirth, align closely with the pagan celebration of spring's renewal. As Christianity spread, it adapted and absorbed pre-existing pagan customs. The symbols associated with Eostre – the hare and the egg – were reinterpreted within a Christian framework. The egg came to symbolize Jesus' tomb, and the act of cracking open the egg represented his resurrection. The hare, or Easter Bunny, was tied to the celebration through folklore and later popularized through greeting cards and Easter egg hunts.

These symbols, although seemingly incongruous with the Christian narrative of Jesus' resurrection, were unfortunately absorbed into the Christian's Easter tradition. Over time, Easter transformed from a pagan festival celebrating nature's renewal to a major Christian holiday commemorating Jesus' resurrection. However, traces of its pagan origins, such as the timing of the celebration and the symbols of eggs and rabbits, remain

The True Celebration for Christians

As followers of Christ, Christians are urged to discern and stay true to their faith's teachings. While Easter has been embraced by many as a Christian festival, its pagan origins and the mysticism surrounding its customs raise critical questions. Despite the clear links between the origins and symbols of Easter and pagan practices, many Christians find the true celebration of Easter in commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, the integration of pagan customs into this Christian festival raises questions around the departure from biblical precedent.

The incorporation of pagan customs into Christian celebrations like Easter has led to concerns about leading Christians astray. The blending of Christian and pagan traditions can blur the lines between the two, potentially leading to misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Christian teachings. The Bible provides guidelines for Christian observances, none of which include a festival akin to Easter. The New Testament, while detailing the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus, does not mandate an annual celebration of these events. Instead, it emphasizes the ongoing remembrance of Christ's sacrifice through practices such as communion ([1 Corinthians 11:24-25](#)).

By partaking in Easter traditions that have pagan roots, Christians may unknowingly align themselves with ancient deities and occult practices. The Bible warns against such associations, urging believers to abstain from practices that honour other gods ([Exodus 20:3](#)). For Christians, the true essence of Easter lies in acknowledging and rejoicing over Jesus' resurrection, which signifies the victory over sin and death. This celebration need not be tied to pagan symbols or dictated by celestial bodies but should be guided by a heartfelt appreciation for Christ's sacrifice.

A Humble Call to Return to Biblical Truth

Given the pagan roots of Easter, Christians are encouraged to critically examine their traditions and ensure their practices align with biblical teachings. It is crucial to question and understand the origins of our traditions. By doing so, we can discern which practices are in line with our faith and which ones veer into the realm of pagan symbolism. As followers of Christ, we are called to separate ourselves from pagan practices. This does not necessarily mean we must abandon all Easter celebrations. Rather, we should seek to eliminate elements that tie us to pagan symbolism and the worship of other deities.

In conclusion, while Easter may be widely celebrated by Christians and non-Christians alike, its origins and symbolism are firmly rooted in pagan traditions. As followers of Christ, let us strive to understand the true origins of our traditions and ensure that our celebrations honour Jesus Christ, free from the influences of ancient deities and occult practices. *"Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."* - [1 Corinthians 5:8](#) The Apostle Paul further instructs in [Romans 12:2](#), *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* The evidence presented unveils the truth behind Easter's origins. While it is celebrated as a Christian festival, its roots are firmly planted in ancient pagan practices. However, understanding the history and origins of Easter doesn't necessarily detract from its significance for Christians today. It serves as a reminder to focus on the true meaning of Easter - the resurrection of Jesus - and to be mindful of the potential for pagan customs to lead Christians away from biblical teachings.

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